DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 271 199 PS 015 788

AUTHOR Myers, Robert G.
TITLE Women's Work and Child Care in the Third World: A Discussion. Summary Report.
INSTITUTION United Nations Children's Fund, New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY Carnegie Corp. of New York, N.Y.; High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, Ypsilanti, Mich.; International Center for Research on Women, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 12 Nov 85
NOTE 18p.; Paper presented at a Meeting at the International Center for Research on Women (Washington, DC, November 12, 1985).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Welfare; *Day Care; *Developing Nations; Early Childhood Education; *Employed Women; Mothers; Nutrition; *Parent Responsibility; Parent Role; Public Policy

ABSTRACT

Two areas of social action in developing nations that have received attention in the last decade are the survival and healthy development of children, and the social and economic well-being of women. In both areas, there has been concern about the relation between women's work and child welfare, but from two different points of view. One view comes from the Women-in-Development (WID) community. Focussing primarily on women's productive roles, WID programs tend either to downplay women's child care responsibilities or to assume that adequate substitute child care is available. They are also likely to assume that children will benefit from women's increased earnings and from the greater control by women over the use of resources that women's work can bring. Another view is typical of policy makers and researchers concerned with child health, nutrition, and development who assume that women should devote themselves primarily to their reproductive and child care roles and that they are available to do so. A corollary is that if women take on a productive role, particularly one outside the home, the welfare of children will suffer. Often, there is little recognition of the additional burdens child survival and development programs may place on women. Or, there is an assumption that seemingly minor burdens will result in longer-term benefits for women through savings of time and money associated with reduced child illness. These summaries of background papers and discussion examine available research evidence related to the above propositions, and report program and policy implications. (Author/RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

2053

ED271199

WOMEN'S WORK AND CHILD CARE IN THE THIRD WORLD: A DISCUSSION

SUMMARY REPORT

of

A meeting held November 12, 1985,
organized jointly by:

The International Center for
Research on Women

and

The Consultative Group on Early
Childhood Care and Development

PS 015788

Note: Both the meeting and the preparation of background papers were funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, within grants to the International Center for Research on Women and the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. This summary has been prepared by Robert Myers, Coordinator, The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Robert G. Myers

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

This report summarizes discussions of women's work and child welfare held on November 12, 1985 at the offices of the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW). The meeting was organized jointly by ICRW and the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development. The (26) individuals who participated (see attached list) came from international agencies, private foundations, universities, private consulting and research organizations, and the United Nations family. Participants represented the fields of psychology, anthropology, economics, demography, education, public health, nutrition, child development, and medicine. This diversity of disciplinary and institutional backgrounds greatly enriched the discussion.

Summary

Two areas of social action in the Third World that have received increasing attention in the last decade are the survival and healthy development of children, and the social and economic well being of women. In both of these areas there has been a concern about the relation between women's work and child welfare, but from two rather different points of view.

One view comes from the Women-in-Development (WID) community, which has focussed primarily on women's productive roles, WID programmes tend either to downplay women's child care responsibilities or to assume that adequate substitute child care is available. They are also likely to assume that children will benefit from women's increased earnings and from the greater control by women over the use of resources that women's work can bring.

Another view is typical of policy makers and researchers concerned with child health, nutrition and development who assume that women should devote themselves primarily to their reproductive and child care roles and are available to do so. A corollary, not always made explicit, is that if women take on a productive role, particularly one outside the home, the welfare of children will suffer. Thus, the reproductive and productive roles of women are set in conflict. Often, there is little recognition of the additional burdens child survival and development programmes may place on women. Or, there is an assumption that seemingly minor burdens will result in longer-term benefits for women through savings of time and money associated with reduced child illness.

The meeting, and the background papers prepared for it, had two main purposes: to examine available research evidence related to the above propositions, and to draw programme and policy implications. Examining the evidence meant challenging conventional wisdom and asking under what circumstances, and for what groups of women and children these over simplified and sometimes misleading generalizations seem to hold or do not. It meant looking behind current myths and practices to ask what variables explain one outcome or another for both women and children.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Several conclusions emerged from the papers and the discussion:

1. There is little evidence that women's work, per se, has negative effects on children's nutritional status, especially after the period of infancy, and mother's income may even enhance the child's well-being.

2. If there is any period during the child's life in which mothers should be encouraged to be with their children, it is during the first 6 to 12 months of life.

3. The effect of women working on child welfare will depend on characteristics of the work (e.g. level of income earned, distance from home, ability to care for child while working, and working hours) and on the cultural and family contexts, including the existence of social support networks, and the role or responsibility of the father as a possible caregiver.

4. The research that addresses questions about converging or conflicting needs of women and children needs to be strengthened. Few studies have provided the methodological "rigor" necessary to make clear statements about the relationship between maternal and child variables. Most studies are correlational and cross-sectional so causal interpretations cannot be made. There is more data on child health variables (breast-feeding, nutritional status and mortality) than other child outcomes; research utilizing a broader range of outcomes is desirable but will require additional attention to measures for some of the concepts that are most important - self-confidence, self-esteem, and even child development - which are hard to measure, particularly cross-culturally.

5. National and international organizations have seldom recognized or tried to deal simultaneously with the potential converging benefits or the possible trade-offs which programmes may have for women and children. The current emphasis on short-term technological solutions to social problems hamper the search for longer term strategies to meet, concurrently, the needs of women and children. Major changes in political and institutional climates are needed to give these issues "currency."

6. Meanwhile, there is a need to analyze the effects, on children as well as women, of including child care components in women's projects. There is a parallel need to examine the effects of child survival and development (CSD) projects on women as well as children. Although it appears to be easier to add a child survival and development component to a women's project (through child care as health measures) than to focus on women's needs in a CSD project, the high level of funding for CSD requires more attention than has been given to women's needs within such projects.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Background Papers and Discussion

As a basis for discussion, summaries were presented of several reviews now in process. The first, presented by Patrice Engle 1) provided a general framework for looking at the intersecting needs of working mothers and children; 2) described some changes in the work patterns of women in developing countries; and 3) examined effects that women's work is thought to have on their role within the family. A second review and presentation, by Joanne Leslie, focussed on the effects of women's work on child nutrition (both infant feeding practices and child growth), seeking hypotheses to explain what, on the surface, seem to be contradictory findings. In the third presentation, Isabel Nieves examined women's work, social support services and child welfare. A fourth presentation, by Judith Evans and Robert Myers, aided the discussion of policy and programme implications by examining actual policies and programmes in selected funding or implementing organizations.

These four presentations will be summarized briefly, followed by main points made in the discussion of each. The reader is asked to keep in mind that a central purpose of the meeting was to provide feedback to the author/presenter whose reviews were presented in draft form. Final versions of the papers will be available in March, 1986 from ICRW and from the Consultative Group.

1. Patrice Engle: The Intersecting Needs of Working Mothers and Their Children: 1980-1985

To provide a general framework for analysis, Patrice Engle outlined a number of costs and benefits to both mothers and to children that might be associated with maternal work for earnings (see Figure 1). She proposed that these effects be examined within the context of changes in family structure resulting from maternal work for earnings. For example, maternal employment may have different consequences for both child and mother if it is a response to the absence of the male head of household due to migration for additional work, or a response to an increase in the availability of assembly-line work for women in multi-national corporations. In the first situation, father absence and economic uncertainty may be key issues. In the second, changes in power relationships within the home may have negative or positive effects on both mother and child. Rather than considering maternal employment as a unitary variable, it is important to examine the family-level circumstances which are associated with work for earnings in each case.

Engle described six changes in maternal work patterns which might have differential effects on family adaptation patterns. These are 1) general economic deterioration leading to an increased incidence of mothers' informal wage-earning activities; 2) migration of male heads of households to urban areas in search of work, leaving de-facto female-headed households in rural areas; 3) migration by young, unmarried women to urban centers in search of work; 4) international migration of individuals or family units into marginal circumstances, such as from Mexico to the U.S.; 5) growth of "off-shore" manufacturing by multi-national corporations which hire large numbers of presumably unmarried women with little job security; and 6) various agrarian

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

reform projects which include changes in family land ownership patterns, work roles, and reliance on cash income.

In an earlier paper, in 1980, Engle focussed on the costs and benefits to children of maternal work for earnings, examining issues such as compatibility of work and child care, and patterns of time allocation of working and non-working mothers. That analysis will be incorporated into the final paper. The current presentation examined the ways in which women's work for earnings could affect children by changing family structures, or by increasing the mother's capabilities. Several hypotheses for these effects have been advanced; Hypotheses 1, 3, and 4 represent possible benefits to children of mother's work, and Hypothesis 2 examines possible costs to children of maternal work for earnings. An underlying problem with much of the research reported is that most is descriptive or correlational. Few studies have been done which examine how changes in maternal work status affect changes in family patterns or child outcomes. We cannot, for instance, be sure whether maternal work for earnings increases decision-making power or whether greater decision-making power increases the likelihood that women will perform an economic role.

Hypothesis 1. (Benefit) First, work and the greater access to resources that it provides, will be associated with increased decision-making power for women. Second, income in the hands of mothers will be more likely to be used for meeting the immediate needs of children than will income in the hands of other family members.

A number of correlational studies support the hypothesis that greater access to resources by women is associated with greater autonomy in making decisions in the domestic and non-domestic spheres. Work for earnings does not always, however, increase women's access to resources; some studies suggested that when women were laborers in an enterprise or farm controlled by others, their role in decision-making in the household was limited. Access to resources, rather than income-earning per se, should be the focus of investigation.

The second part of the hypothesis, that mothers are more likely than are other family members to allocate income to the immediate needs of children, receives considerable support from anecdotal reports, and from the few systematic studies (e.g. Kumar in India, Gambia) that have been done. Studies on parental perceptions of responsibilities indicate that, at least in some areas, fathers perceive that feeding of children is the responsibility of the mother.

Hypothesis 2. (Cost) Women's work for earnings is a divisive factor in families, particularly between marriage partners. The literature reviewed suggested that the need for a woman to work is often a response to the absence, temporary or permanent, of a male head of household, rather than a cause of his leaving. A few studies suggested that in some cases, women's employment provided the vehicle for escaping from a difficult or even abusive relationship. Several theories of marital solidarity were outlined: one proposes that sex-role differentiation is the basis for marital harmony, whereas another suggests that similarity of roles is conducive of marital

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

harmony. In the first case, maternal work for earnings could disrupt traditional sex-role patterns, whereas in the second, women's work would lead to greater role similarity. An examination of the effects of maternal work for earnings on marital relationships should consider alternative models of marital solidarity.

3) Hypothesis 3. (Cost and Benefit) Women who work will receive additional help from other family members in domestic tasks. Women who work outside the home spend less supervisory time with their children. However, child-rearing tasks in many societies are shared by others, so that mother's time with their children after the first year does not vary substantially whether or not they are generating an income. It is hypothesized that when the mother works for earnings, other family members such as the father or siblings increase their child-care role, which may benefit both them and the young child. However, evidence from developing countries, and from Mexican migrants to the U.S., suggests that this increase in help from the fathers is minimal, even though verbal support for increased help may be given. Help from siblings replaces the mother to some extent, but most reports suggests that these mothers who work for income experience a "double day" phenomenon or an increased workload.

Hypothesis 4. (Benefit) Women who work for earnings will have increased levels of self-confidence. The evidence to date suggests that when women's employment leads to community-level respect, it is associated with enhanced self-confidence and experiences of control. In the U.S., these attitudinal variables are associated with benefits for children. In cultures in which the role of mothering is primary, the work role may be seen as secondary, and a mother's attitude about the adequacy of her mothering may be central to her self-esteem. The contribution of self-confidence to "maternal competence," a variable which has been associated with improved outcomes for children under impoverished circumstances, should be investigated further.

The review led Engle to propose an intergenerational model of "maternal competence," derived from psychological attachment theory. In developing countries, the initial parent-child bond appears to establish a model for patterns of child care enacted when that child becomes a mother. If this relationship holds true in other societies, second generation consequences of impaired parenting might be predicted. Efforts should be made to support women's mothering and their beliefs in their mothering adequacy, particularly when they are working outside the home. Maternal-child programmes should, to whatever extent possible, build on existing skills in a supportive way, rather than focus on the need for re-education. Some literature suggests that a women's ability to use extended support networks, which may be critical for her children's development, may be related to her experience as a child and her willingness to trust non-family members.

Engle concluded that:

- Maternal work for earnings needs to be examined within the family context;

- Programmes addressed to working mothers should include opportunities for these mothers to perceive themselves as competent;

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- Efforts should be made to allow a primary caretaker to be with a child during the first crucial 3 to 6 months of life, and training should be given to mothers or substitute caregivers on appropriate care and stimulation of children during that period.

Discussion of Engle's paper.

Although the following will not capture the richness of discussion and the full nature of the exchange, it will provide the reader with an idea of points that were raised.

1) Based on the observation that poor women often do manage to cope effectively by activating and maintaining supportive social networks, a question was raised about the validity of the conclusion that there is a need for greater self-esteem and competence training. The idea of having to help women to be and feel "competent" was questioned. In reply, the point was made that although women may develop networks, there nevertheless are many examples of women for whom networks are not functioning. These are often women who are uprooted and under considerable stress. These women need help.

2) In response to a question about a request to translate the research findings into policy implications and "entry points" that might minimize potential trade-offs, Engle suggested an emphasis on the first year of life and on re-examining the possible social costs when mothers must trade off child care time for work and when adequate alternative child care is not available. If, as suspected, the cost is high, then increased investments in support to the mother and in alternative child care, particularly during the first year of a child's life, may be justified.

3) How can women be helped to feel competent and raise self-esteem? Through encouragement from social service workers with whom women have contact. By supporting women in their parenting role so they are more successful at it.

4) A suggestion was made that T.V. holds considerable potential for providing parental advice and support.

5) There needs to be more attention given to the roles of men in caregiving, a topic which, unfortunately, seems to have been left out of the discussion.

6) A question was raised about how one measures such variables as "maternal competence" and "self-esteem". These concepts need further definition and specification.

2. Joanne Leslie: Women's Work and Child Nutrition in the Third World

Leslie's review provided a re-examination of the conventional wisdom, accepted by much of the nutrition and public health community, that women's labor force participation will have a negative effect on breast-feeding and infant feeding which, in turn, will have a negative effect on survival and on the health and nutritional status of infants and pre-school age children.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

To probe this assumption, Leslie reviewed 41 studies published between 1972 and 1985 providing data from 27 different countries in Asia, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. In summary tables, Leslie presented a description of each study in terms of its authors, country, setting (urban or rural), sample and method of data-gathering, characteristics of the women/children/households studied, type of work, infant feeding or nutrition status measures used, and the method of analysis. A brief summary of findings was also included in the tables. The studies were broken into two groups, those focussing on work and feeding practices, and those emphasizing work and nutritional status. In each case, methodologically better and poorer studies were separated out.

Guiding Leslie's review was a model of presumed linkages between women's education, women's work, and child nutritional status. In the model, women's education and/or work influence knowledge and practices, the use of health and nutrition services, the duration of breast-feeding, child care time and income - each of which, in turn, influences nutritional status. Earlier reviews of studies relating women's educational status and children's nutritional status have concluded with reasonable confidence that higher levels of maternal education are significantly and positively related to better child nutritional status and lower child mortality. Similar clarity was not found for women's work and children's nutritional status, countering conventional wisdom claiming a negative association. The relationship is complicated because "work status" is not fixed and because both directions of causality are possible. Whether the relationship is positive or negative will depend on the time spent working, the level of earnings, the type of work, family composition, the availability and quality of alternative child care, and the age of the child.

With respect to breast-feeding, Leslie found that women's work is not associated with a decline in the incidence of breast-feeding. Results suggest, however, that there may be a relationship to the duration of breast-feeding; working mothers shift earlier from exclusive breast-feeding to mixed feeding. If exclusive breast-feeding lasts three months, this finding may not be particularly worrisome because shortly thereafter weaning foods should, in any event, begin to be introduced. Moreover, few women (somewhat more in urban areas and in Latin America) give work as their reason for stopping breast-feeding. The findings point to a need for increased attention to the feeding and health of children at the time of weaning when they are at highest risk of malnutrition due to special health and nutrition needs.

Examining the relationship between women's work and children's nutritional status focusses attention on the extent to which a trade-off occurs between income earned (which combines amount of time worked and level of pay) and time devoted to child rearing. In the review (see also discussion below), evidence of threshholds was found. For instance, in Indonesia, work by a mother for more than 40 hours per week had a negative effect on nutritional status only if pay was below the minimum wage threshhold. Both working time and the amount earned also affect the kind and quality of alternative care that can be purchased.

There was evidence as well that mothers who are able to work at home during the early months of a child's life are less likely to have malnourished

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

children, but that as children grew older, the positive income effect of working outside the home may outweigh the greater child care time mothers can provide by being at home.

Principal policy conclusions drawn by Leslie are:

1) That policy-makers, planners and programme implementers should not assume there is a causal and negative relationship between a mother's working and malnourishment.

2) That increased attention should be given to feeding and health practices at the time of weaning.

3) That policies and programmes facilitating work by mothers in the home during the first months of a child's life could positively affect nutritional and health status.

The review has several implications for future research. First, more attention should be given to how women's work is defined and measured. Comparisons are needed that take into account the overall income status of working versus non-working women. (In some cases working women come from poorer households than non-working women. In other cases, particularly where women are the heads of household, working women will be better off than non-working women.) Effects of the availability and quality of substitute child care on nutritional status also need to be studied. A more careful examination is needed of the way in which the presumed trade-off between earnings and caretaker time occurs (see also the presentation by Nieves).

Future research should not attempt to arrive at a simplistic conclusion that women's work has a positive or negative effect on child nutrition. Rather, it should aim at identifying the ways in which women's work affects infant feeding practices and child nutritional status and other measures of child welfare. And it should seek out factors that may mediate the relationship, such as access to quality of substitute child care, and prices of food (particularly food to infants and weaning age of children). Further, there is a need for increased understanding of nutritionally desirable practices and indicators of healthy growth and development.

Discussion of Leslie's paper.

Suggestions and observations made during the discussion were the following.

1) Results were offered by Chloe O'Gara from a study in Honduras that is not yet written up. This study reinforces the existence of an income threshhold affecting the work-nutrition relationship, whereby children under a year will be worse off if working women earn less than the minimum wage. However, for children a year or older, that difference did not appear and "maternal competence" rather than income seemed to be a more important determinant of the child's nutritional status. (Competence was inferred from the attitude of mothers toward their babies and from the general appearance of the mothers and their households.) In the Honduran study, women who breast-fed for at least two months before weaning and who worked, had the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

healthiest babies. They were also the most "competent". These results seemed to be consistent with what was presented by both Engle and Leslie.

The point was also raised that the quality of alternative care (not just maternal "competence") is also important. There are few studies that look at the quality of alternative caregivers. This does not need to be done in a very sophisticated way - as suggested by one Indian study which found that the older the caretaker substitute, the less malnourished the baby.

2) It would be useful to consider the effects of the presence or absence of husbands as a mediating variable.

3) A household decision-making (bargaining) framework might be applied to examine the questions: How does the fact of working for income change the relative power in the family? Do parental decisions take into account maximizing the welfare of the child? If so, then the problem is less one of changing parental perceptions (sometimes assumed to be the problem) and more one of changing the conditions that constrain decisions.

4) When examining the relationship between women, work and child welfare, it is important to consider differences related to where a family is in the family cycle. The relationship may be different for a couple that is young and has only one baby and for a couple, age 35-40 with several children.

5) For policy purposes, the most important question may not be whether or not a woman works, but may be, "Which are the most vulnerable mothers?" Identifying the most vulnerable mothers may also identify the children who are most "at risk".

3. Isabel Nieves: The Social Support Resources of Working Mothers: An Outline

As suggested in the previous reviews, an important intervening variable affecting the relationship between women's work and child welfare is the availability and quality of social supports families can utilize. Social support is support provided by someone other than the mother and is exclusive of her own resources and capital. To examine this issue Nieves began with a model relating the circumstances of work, poverty, child care, and characteristics of the woman and the child to available social resources (including both informal and formal services) and then to the requirements of good infant feeding. This set of variables affects breast-feeding and supplemental feeding practices and, through them, the nutritional status of the child. The social supports included in Nieves discussion were financial, informational, emotional, and task oriented support (help with child rearing, care, feeding, housework, etc.).

In her presentation Nieves suggested that formal support takes many forms - from maternity leaves and benefits to provision of primary health care, creches and other day care arrangements, flexi-time, etc. Survival strategies and social networks developed by women (families) contribute informal support which seems to be preferred to formal services. Informal support may be

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

provided free or may involve some payment. It is often provided by kin but also comes from neighbors and community groups. By definition, informal support arrangements are not regularized. They usually involve reciprocity. These spontaneous uninstitutionalized strategies are often creative solutions to survival-threatening crises. Informal support systems are increasingly recognized as arrangements to be strengthened and up-graded rather than replaced.

One starting point for examining social support systems is to look at patterns of delegating child care responsibility. In general, the literature shows that most mothers are not the exclusive, or even the main caregivers for their children. In pre-capitalist societies non-mothers provide about half of the child care time for children under one year of age and about three-fourths for children over one. Contemporary studies of time allocation also show a relatively small proportion of time devoted by mothers to exclusive child care. That time seems to decrease only slightly when women are employed in market work or agricultural production. This finding can be attributed both to care by others and to the fact that child care is seldom an activity performed exclusive of other activities.

Household composition and the availability of other family members as caretakers or workers may have a greater influence on time spent caretaking than whether or not a woman works outside the home. For instance, when girls 13 to 15 years of age are in the home, the mother is more likely to work outside the home and wean earlier. The presence of boys age 13-15, on the other hand, seems to prolong breast-feeding because boys can go to work - substituting for the income earning role of the mother rather than for the caretaking function.

Nieves presented, but did not discuss in detail, a set of hypotheses she plans to examine as she continues her review. For example:

1) Infant feeding decisions are a function of the child's age, the mother's economic and time constraints, the availability of child care substitutes, and the availability of breast milk substitutes.

2) Women who work outside the house will adopt a mixed feeding pattern (breast and bottle) earlier than women who do not work outside the home, and will breast-feed when at home but delegate child feeding responsibility to others when they leave the house.

3) The use of formal social support services for child care will be determined primarily by the availability of informal child care options in the household and the neighbourhood.

4) Increased school attendance among girls 7-12 reduces total child care time of children 1-5 but not of infants 0-1. It also reduces reliability of home-based informal support mechanisms for child rearing and feeding.

5) For working women, infant feeding decision may be influenced, not by work per se, but by the conditions of work, hours and scheduling of work, distance to workplace, and salary levels.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

6) The availability of adequate formal social support services will increase the likelihood that working mothers will be able to adopt adequate infant feeding practices.

a) Women who utilize day care services in or near a workplace will be able to breast-feed for longer periods than those who do not have such services.

b) Accessible, reliable and efficient transportation systems will increase the likelihood that women will breast-feed their infants for longer periods.

Most of these hypotheses will be examined as part of a research project the International Center for Research on Women is now carrying out in Jamaica. That research is based on data gathered from 150 female heads of households who recently gave birth, who worked during their last two tri-mesters of pregnancy, and who have another young child living. The work patterns, child care arrangements, and child rearing practices of these women are being followed and are being related to the nutritional status (and changes) of their newborn children during their first year of life. Data are being gathered at six weeks, three months, six months, and nine months. Preliminary results indicate that the women are relying heavily on friends, kin, and neighbors for support even when they have not returned to work.

Discussion of Nieves' presentation.

1) Whether an informal or formal arrangement is preferred may depend on the mother's assessment of both the adequacy and ability of the alternatives. A mother's first preference may be for a trusted family member to provide child care; but in practice that is not always possible. In some cases, care by a family member may not be preferred because the family member available is not experienced.

2) A mother's role as household manager is important. One might hypothesize that a mother's preference and assessment of caretaking options will be influenced by the ease with which she can continue her control and management. Supervision and control over child care may be related to education of the mother.

3) From a demographic perspective should one encourage women to work outside the home because it would reduce the demand for children? This question was raised to point out a counter argument to the conventional wisdom of discouraging work.

4) There can be a negative effect of social support on women and families if that support overwhelms the person supported and creates a dependency by her on the support system. Sometimes people cannot develop a "healthy" social network. One factor affecting the ability to develop and use a network is self-esteem.

5) To what extent are informal social support systems economically efficient as compared with formal support systems? It is possible to imagine that the introduction of a formal system (e.g. a creche) would undermine an

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

existing informal system of child care that is operating more efficiently and effectively. Introducing government services may take the responsibility off parents, but in so doing, contribute to inefficiency and dependence. The answer to these speculations and to the opposite point of view which was presented with equal force, is that we do not have the evidence to make the judgement.

4. Judith Evans: Improving Programme Actions to Meet the Intersecting Needs of Women and Children in Developing Countries: A Policy and Programme Review

The paper and presentation by Evans focussed on policies and programmes of selected international agencies concerned with improving the welfare of both women and young children. Data for the paper came from documents describing policies or programmes, from reviews of journals, and from interviews with a variety of donor agency personnel, private foundation staff, and individuals from non-governmental organizations. The following summarizes points made about programming:

1) Historically. The traditions that have provided conceptual base for the development of women's and children's programmes have not taken into account the intersecting needs of women and children. Programme experience over the past decade has brought increasing awareness that projects developed for one group may not be supportive of the other group's needs. Today there are programmes which successfully meet the needs of both groups, but they are scarce.

2) Programmatically. In general, those programmes which are successfully meeting the needs of women and children have evolved as the programme has been implemented and needs have been identified. It is more common for women in development programmes to eventually include a child care component than it is for an early childhood care and education programme to include programming for women.

a. Where an income-generating programme has been developed for women, child care is a likely add on; it develops as a result of women's expressed need for child care support.

b. If an early childhood care and education programme develops a component for women, programming focuses on her nurturing or reproductive role, not her productive role.

3) Organizationally. In funding agencies, the further from the field one goes, the less awareness there is within current programming of the intersecting needs of women and children and the potential trade-offs. Those agencies and organizations that work with national governments generally have lower levels of awareness of the issues than non-governmental agencies. Many governments have a conservative perspective on women's role in development. At the same time, they may be willing to invest funds in programmes which promote children's survival and development.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

4) In the Literature. Journals which focus on women's role in development seldom refer to children, except to mention the need for maternity leave or for child care centers created in support of women's changing role. Child development journals generally focus on how to create effective programmes for young children; little or no consideration is given to the needs of parents.

5. Conceptually. There is at present some evidence of a willingness to re-examine the conceptual position of the 1970s which emphasized separating women's productive and reproductive role. There is a move to recognize the value of both roles. Today arguments are being made to the effect that:

a. It is legitimate to support the development of women as women by strengthening women's roles as mothers. This is being done by: providing monetary or work-related rewards for child care and education -- recognizing that these activities can be productive as well as personally rewarding; and by recognizing women's participation in the provision of child care as a valid form of work for women that should be judged as other jobs are judged -- in terms of pay, incremental knowledge, skill development, security, training, self-esteem, etc.

b. It is legitimate to support children's development by focussing on the development of women in their productive roles. Those characteristics which facilitate women's development as producers also enhance their parenting role. By providing better health, increasing women's educational opportunities, providing access to technical training, assuring that women have access to income, providing women with credit and land, and freeing women from the long hours required for household maintenance, children's situation will improve.

Projecting into the future, Evans indicated she thought that the changing climate could allow women's and children's intersecting needs to be brought together conceptually and programmatically. But those currently concerned with the issues will have to provide support to the effort -- through continued research, through dissemination of information, and through advocacy.

Several policy implications were drawn:

a. There needs to be a distinction made between how programmes are conceptualized and how they are implemented. While it is important to conceptualize and design a programme to meet simultaneously the intersecting needs of women and children, that may be difficult in practice. In implementation, a sequential approach and "adding on" may be preferable to trying to satisfy fully both sets of needs from the outset. There is a greater likelihood of success if a programme starts with one component or the other, but with the early and clear intention of adding additional components.

b. Within some agencies policy is built upon (or evolves from) successful projects. Thus it can be argued that the lessons learned from successful programmes need to be crystalized and disseminated. Likewise, additional field projects need to be developed in support of the intersecting needs of women and children.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

c. It is important to present programme planners and implementers with practical information on how to implement complementary and supportive programme components; some are willing but have no understanding of what is needed or how to accomplish the task.

d. In both conceptualization and implementation it is important to be sensitive to current frames of reference. For policy makers it is important to frame the issue in a way that helps them respond to their current pressures. For instance, community programmes for women and/or children must be started within the framework of culturally sanctioned activities.

Discussion of Evan's paper.

1) Experience supports the idea that it is easier to add on child care to women's programmes than the reverse. Women see the need and are willing to do so. The more participatory the programme structure, the more likely it is that issues of child care will be addressed. There are definite cost advantages to adding on child care to women's programmes. These need to be quantified. For instance, there may be savings related to reductions in work time lost or in cost savings with reduced expenses for healthy versus sick children. On the other hand, the idea of adding on child care and development elements to women-in-development programmes, although good in theory, may represent a dilution of resources for women-in-development programmes. It may not be cost effective to incorporate child care into women's programmes when viewed on a large scale. In small, participatory projects it may be cost effective but how does one replicate on a large scale, and with what implications for costs? The net effect may also be to transfer costs to women whose opportunity costs are lowest. Is this a form of exploitation? One approach governments might take is to provide "matching grants" to local organizations. This can mobilize local resources.

2) In programming to combine the productive and reproductive roles of women, there is a tendency to focus on creating alternative child care arrangements so that women can leave home to earn income. That may be appropriate for children over one year. But the review presented earlier suggests that for children under one year, women should seek the type of work, and or the support that allows them to participate in and directly supervise child care. Therefore, we might think not only of supporting substitute child care, but also of creating ways to maintain the income of working mothers in the period following birth. The most common formal way of doing that, often honored in the breach, is through maternity leaves during which a partial salary is paid. There are other, less formal solutions, however. For instance, in Jamaica, market women who have recently given birth continue to prepare at home their basket of goods for sale, then entrust the sale to other traders.

3) There is a need to sensitize those who are supporting child survival programmes, to which a great deal of money is being directed, of the importance within their programmes of elements that benefit women. In most cases, the success of child survival and development programmes rests squarely on the shoulders of women. There is a growing and legitimate concern that the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"technological fix" represented by immunization campaigns and other elements of the GOBI strategy will not go very far toward accelerating the decline in infant mortality unless attention is given to women as the main actors and as people who are already under considerable time pressure to accomplish what is necessary for survival. The simple technological approach to child survival is least likely to benefit and most likely to place burdens on women. Although there is a desire on the part of programme people in several agencies to look "beyond survival" to development (both for young children and for women as agents of economic and social development), it is very hard politically to push these ideas. The focus is on survival. Well-grounded arguments and solid facts are needed to help make the case. Information about the patterns of use of women's time and the economic implications of the patterns need to be made more available to policy and programme people. If done, this would help build appreciation for the connection between women's economic roles and their supportive role in the child survival process. Another obvious area of direct overlap between programmes of child survival and programmes designed to benefit women is special attention to women's health during pregnancy and in the post-natal period.

4) There are benefits to women from more general programmes of economic development that should not be overlooked. For example, a review of water projects by the ICRW showed that provision of potable water is not only a good health measure but it also cuts down on women's working hours. Another study showed that provision of electricity gives women disposable time for child care.

5) The rediscovery of fathers that seems to be taking place in the United States cannot be exported but there is, nevertheless, a need to bring fathers into the discussion. In some places and in some organizations, this is being attempted to by taking "the family" rather than the individual as both the unit of analysis and the programming unit.

6) Not enough attention has been given in the discussion to the cultural supports and constraints which differ enormously from place to place. Religion and language, for instance, should be important variables in an analysis of relationships and of programmes.

Postscript

Following the meeting it was suggested that a summary be prepared for distribution to individuals interested in the topic. In addition, there was a call for follow-up activities that might include: additional research identified in the meeting as important, the evaluation of effects CSD programmes have on women, the writing of case studies describing programmes in which women's productive and reproductive roles are integrated with positive results for both women and children, and the organization of regional meetings in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to discuss women's work and child welfare issues.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Figure 1

Costs and Benefits of Maternal Work for Earnings

To Mother		To Child	
Costs	Benefits	Costs	Benefits
Increased workload	Increased status in household	Inadequate care, feeding	More income for food
Physical stress	More decision-making power	Less time with adult	Small family size
Role conflict	Control over resources	Less medical care	Positive experiences in alternative care
Worry about children	Enhanced self-esteem	Lowered school attendance	Competent role model (particularly girls)
Marital or generational dissatisfaction	Development of work-related skills		More skills on mother's part
	Possible increase in security		Child involved in economic productivity
	More help at home		Mother values education more

BEST COPY AVAILABLE